

# Amazighs in Moroccan EFL textbooks: An integrated critical discourse analysis

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## 1. Introduction

In Morocco, the linguistic, cultural, and ethnic background is both rich and complex. The ethnic composition of the country is largely made up of Arabs and Amazighs. This complex multi-ethnic and multilingual setting is replete with contradictions and disparities in the sense that “nothing is what it seems to be” (Ennaji, 2005, p. 1). While Arabs constitute the dominant ethnic group, both linguistically and politically, the status of Amazighs has never ceased to provoke debate. Key Amazigh grievances include under-representation and under-valuation. Amazigh activists militate for a formal acknowledgement of the linguistic and the cultural rights of Amazighs, thus, denying the deliberate reduction of their culture to folklore status (Maddy-Weitzman, 2012), denouncing the decline in the rate of Moroccans who use the Amazigh varieties which renders Amazigh speakers “a minority within the region” (Maddy-Weitzman, 2015a, p. 1), and, above all, promulgating “a redefinition of Morocco on the basis of its pre-colonial and pre-Islamic Berber heritage” (Hoffman & Miller, 2010, p. 86). In their forward-looking strategy, the Amazigh cultural and political movement calls for more social visibility in public life domains (Idhssaine & El Kirat, 2019), fair access to language and education rights (Gagliardi, 2019), joint right to the protection of Amazigh customs from “erosion and disappearance” (Jay, 2015, p. 68), and firm endorsement of their “ethnocultural demands as part of a broader democratic transformation of society and state” (Maddy-Weitzman, 2015a, p. 2499).

In such contexts, it is often assumed that official school textbooks strengthen the dominant national discourses while only partially considering the explicit views and outlooks of the various cultural and ethnic groups (Apple, 2000; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Macgilchrist, 2018; Silverman, 1999; among others). Locally produced textbooks are argued to constitute social capital sites (Bourdieu, 1986) whose key tasks are to institutionalize, legitimize, and thereby naturalize the nation’s master narratives through demarcating its borders and acculturating its different peoples to its selected traditions, values, and ideals of an imagined community (Anderson, 1991), or a collective identity (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Williams, 2014; Yaqub, 2014). The ideological supremacy of textbooks is even more problematic in multi-ethnic countries, such as Morocco, where the ethnic content included in the mainstream curriculum is likely to be biased, fragmented, or uneven (Banks, 1993). Such countries have always had to face the arduous and convoluted task of “nation-building” that requires the fulfilment of a unified and continuing national narrative that would shore up a distinct national identity.

The present study grows out of the above concerns and sets out to provide a critical appraisal of ethnic content in officially produced EFL textbooks in Morocco over the last three decades. More specifically yet, I aim at researching the discursive recontextualizations of Amazigh ethnic groups in locally developed EFL textbooks, from the early 1980s up to now. The corpus came from 33 EFL textbooks, counting ancillaries such as teachers’ books and workbooks (Appendix 1), which have been developed, approved, and distributed by the Moroccan Ministry of Education, and have been required to be used in every school, public or private. Following Said’s (2019) periodization scheme of the development of EFL official textbooks in Morocco, the selected textbooks were distributed over three periods that match the historical development of EFL textbooks in Morocco: The Germinal Phase (from the early 1980s- to the late 1990s), the Critical Phase (from the mid-1990s to mid-2000), and the Take-off Phase (from mid-2000 up to now)

This considerable time frame allows for a deep reflection and a reliable analysis of the official narratives that make up Morocco’s selective vision of its ethnic components. The examined corpus, the study hypothesizes, records a *snapshot* of a Morocco moving from a traditional state towards

Today, Amazighs seem to account for a substantial, yet statistically ambiguous, proportion of the total population. The relative size of their community cannot be taken as determinant of its socio-political status. According to Zaid and El Allame (2018), researchers tend to cast doubt on the real number of Amazighs in Morocco, claiming that the number is between 60 or 70 percent. Recently, Ahmed El Hlimi Al Alami, chairperson of Morocco's High Commission for Planning, has declared that 26.7 percent of Moroccans speak Amazigh, with 14 percent using Tashelhit, 4.1 percent speaking Tamazight, and 4.1 percent Tarifit. Castellino and Cavanaugh (2013) refer to this ambiguous situation of ethnocultural and religious minorities as majoritarian minorities, political minorities, and trapped minorities "who are numerically larger but excluded from sites of power" (p. 6).

The statistical ambiguity outlined above comes with another terminological opacity. There is not a common compromise among political activists and scholars as to which term (i.e., Amazigh(s), Berber or Imazighen) is most appropriate. Since the 1990s, the term "Amazigh" (or Amazigh language) has seen widespread use, gradually replacing "Berber" to the extent that it is accepted in academic discourse. People who speak "Berber," however, favor "Imazighen", in the singular "Amazigh", which means a "free (noble) man" over the appellation "Berber". Some linguists, however, (e.g., Ennaji, 2005; Sadiqi, 2009; Youssi, 1990) prefer to retain the term "Berber" over other labels because of two reasons. First, the term "Berber" in the Anglo-Saxon world, does not carry the same negative implications. The second reason is that some linguists believe that the "term 'Berber' is neutral whereas 'Tamazight' cognates with the name of a specific variety of Berber, a loose taxonomy that might exclude *Tashelhit*, *Tarifit*, and the other tribes" (Sadiqi, 2009, p. 12).

In politics, the shift in Morocco's official policy towards Amazighs along with the adoption of a new language policy have resulted in the recognition of the Amazigh culture as an integral component of the state's mosaic ethnic make-up and with Tamazight as a national language. During the 2011 Arab Spring, the Amazigh language was officialized alongside Arabic in the New Constitution (art.5), which asserts that the Moroccan culture "is forged by the convergence of its Arab-Islamist, Berber and Saharan-Hassanic components, nourished and enriched by its African, Andalusian, Hebraic and Mediterranean influences" (The Moroccan Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research, 1999). The new constitutional gains have had broad symbolic significance, and have been greeted with a massive approval from the Amazigh movements in Morocco (Madani et al., 2012),

In education, the National Charter for Education and Training (NCET, 1999) and the Royal Institute of the Amazigh Culture have helped in the standardization and promotion of the Amazigh language and culture. Equally, the establishment of the Royal Institute, largely referred to in French as "Institut Royal de la Culture Amazighe" (IRCAM), have responded to a long-standing demand by the Amazigh movement for better inclusion of Amazigh speakers into the national fabric. In 2003, and in partnership with IRCAM, the Moroccan Ministry of Education initiated the first formal teaching of Amazigh language. By so doing, 'Morocco was the only North African state, "and only the second core Arab League member state (after Iraq), in which Arabic was not the sole official language" (Maddy-Weitzman, 2015a, p. 5).

In its quest to correct "potential" ethnic imbalances and ensure a unified national narrative, the Moroccan government has turned to different educational policies and reforms to boost economic development and foster national unity. One of the main aspirations of the Moroccan educational system has been to promote ethnic harmony, national unity, gender equality and economic competitiveness. In this regard, NCET (1999), National Curriculum (The White Book), and The Strategic Vision (2015–2030) have advocated a solid and an indivisible national unity through the enhancement of the Moroccan cultural diversity where Amazigh cultural and social rights are central. The Strategic Vision, the last episode in the educational reforms in Morocco, for example,

teaching materials tend to focus on specific recurrent themes where ethnic groups are often linked to festivals, singing and dancing. Ethnicity, here, seems to conjure up images of primitivity, poverty, tradition, and nostalgia. The discursive construction of space is also significant as places that are linked to ethnic groups are often represented as poor, purely rural and natural (Chu, 2015; Slimi, 2009). Consequently, implications tend to urge governments, textbook designers, and various stakeholders to take urgent actions to ensure that ethnic groups are granted equal and fair representation.

In brief, minority ethnic groups are represented as mysterious (Gladney, 1994), folklorized (Crawford & Hoffman, 2018), commodified, and static (Crawford & Silverstein, 2004), “who only exist in a distant past—in contrast to the contemporary society” (Chu, 2015, p. 477). Hence, they are sealed, generalized, exaggerated, and sometimes demonized (Slimi, 2009), or cast in a mythological discourse that hides sensuality and beauty through the discursive process of characterization, essentialism, and cataloguing (Gladney, 1994).

### 3.3. Critical discourse analysis

This study privileges CDA as a multidisciplinary and multi-methodological approach for exposing structural relationships of domination, discrimination, and power in discourse (Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk, 1993). Textbooks are understood as ideological sites of struggle, published within “the political and economic constraints of the markets” (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 2), and orchestrated through the linguistic and pictorial modalities of the state selective narratives (Curd-Christiansen & Weninger, 2015).

In their endeavor to unveil the interconnectedness of social problems, CD analysts choose “the perspective of those who suffer most, and critically analyze those in power, those who are responsible, and those who have the means and the opportunity to solve such problems” (Van Dijk, 1986, p. 4). According to Wodak et al. (2009), the central objective of CDA is “to unmask ideologically permeated and often obscured structures of power, political control, and dominance, as well as discriminatory inclusion and exclusion in language use” (p. 8).

In this study, the privileged understanding of discourse is largely informed by Bernstein’s (1996) notion of pedagogical recontextualizations and Van Leeuwen’s (2008) extension of the term that all discourses, pedagogical or otherwise, are recontextualized social practices. Our understanding of discourse undertakes a critical language analysis of the verbal as well as the visual representation of the social practices in all social contexts. Given the centrality of discourses as recontextualized social practices, the study follows the chains of arguments that Van Leeuwen has developed in several writings and has finally culminated in his (Van Leeuwen, 2008) seminal work. The prime aspect of recontextualized social practices hinges on the hypothesis that “discourses not only represent what is going on, they also evaluate it, ascribe purpose to it, justify it, and so on, and in many texts these aspects of representation become far more important than the representation of the social practice itself” (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 6).

### 3.4. Social actor analysis

Social Actor Analysis (SAA) has the critical merits of combining linguistic and sociological insights to the analysis of how social actors are represented in discourse. Van Leeuwen (2008, 2009) has been credited for outlining “a sociological grammar” (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 56) by developing a “socio-semantic inventory” which outlines critically relevant connections among the various lexico-grammatical options available to represent social actors and therefore make salient their theoretical and critical relevance (Van Leeuwen, 2008). Van Leeuwen’s socio-semantic inventory has been intensively drawn on by researcher to examine the officially produced textbooks (e.g., Dashti & Mehrpour, 2017; Roohani & Tanbakooei, 2012).

The Social Actors Approach is one of the major approaches to CDA. The approach broadly draws on sociological and linguistic insights, particularly the reciprocal relationship between action and

vision of its cultural components. Similarly, the large corpus of EFL textbooks offers critical insights into the discursive representation of ethnicity along with its accompanying discourses. These textbooks, this study hypothesizes, offer a socio-historical portrait of a Morocco moving from a traditional state towards a modern nation-state and highlight the process of pedagogizing (Zhao, 2014) the polytechnic citizens to a new form of social affiliation. Finally, since all the investigated textbooks received the Ministry of Education approval, the study claims that they offer one of the most extensive accounts to the growth of the identity narrative of “the Moroccan” nation.

#### 4.3. Theoretical units of the analysis

In CDA, units of analysis are not stable; they are often tailored according to the different research agendas that scholars set beforehand. Generally, researchers working within the CDA paradigm tend to focus on different units of analysis which are often situated between the clause and the whole texts or conversations (Babaii & Sheikhi, 2017). In this study, I adopted Van Dijk’s (1981) “episode” as a meso-level discursive unit of analysis, which is situated between clause/sentence and the whole unit of conversation or text. According to him, “episodes appear to be linguistically and psychologically relevant units of discourse structure and processing” (p. 192).

##### 4.3.1. Amazighs vs. Arabs

Before deciding on the “appropriate” analytical categories and scheme needed for the analysis of the representation of Amazighs in Moroccan EFL textbooks, the precise description of who would qualify as Amazigh is compulsory. This category is particularly problematic because it has been so ill-defined, polysomic, and contested, raising the legitimate question as to who would(not) count as an Amazigh. The analysis proceeded in two complementary steps.

First, the differentiation between *direct* and *indirect inclusion* (be it linguistic or visual) of Amazigh social actors was established. Direct inclusion comprised instances where the discourse clearly designated certain social actors as being “Berber or Amazigh”. Indirect inclusion, be it linguistic or visual, defined Amazighs by zooming on predefined sociocultural aspects inherent to them, such as language, location, dress, food, festivals, and ceremonies. Instances of analysis are critically relevant “insofar as they are critically nontrivial and can be coupled with distinct lexico-grammatical realizations” (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 57). Therefore, I considered to be relevant all linguistic or pictorial elements describing Amazigh, be they direct or indirect.

The second step places Amazighs in a dialectal relationship to Arabs, thought to be the dominant social group. This choice redefines ethnicity in Morocco in terms of two subcategories: Amazighs vs. Arabs. The most troublesome issue here, however, has been that due to the Arabs’ prevailing status in Morocco, they have been portrayed as if they were simply “Moroccans”. In other words, “Moroccanness” has usually been normalized and replaced by an unmarked cosmopolitan image (Chu, 2015) representing an unspecified “Moroccanness”.

Inspired by Chu’s (2015) analysis of Chinese school textbooks, and in order to capture this undistinguishable representation of the Arabs as “Moroccans” in general, a code of “Arab” was given to an episode when: (1) the ethnicity of the participants or ethnic features of “Arab” was clearly exposed in the texts or the description of the pictures; and (2) a reference to the features of Arabs was not openly told but implied by linguistic and/ or pictorial information.

##### 4.3.2. Socio-semantic categories of analysis

Theoretically, the working units of analysis adopted in this study have drawn on the “Social Actor Analysis Model” (Van Leeuwen, 2008). However, the interpretation of the findings has been inspired by insights from the “sociology of the invisible/the unmarked” (Blumer, 1969; Brekhus, 1998; Scott, 2018), Abdou’s (2017) analytical model to the analysis of Copts in Egyptian history textbooks, and Chu’s (2015) three distinct yet related analytical categories used in the portrayal of

“Imazighen”. As I examined the relevant episodes, I broke the data into manageable instances and then placed them under the corresponding units of analysis. The second stage was the quantitative analysis. Tables of frequencies and percentages summarizing linguistic representations were generated. Finally, while focusing on the key socio-semantic options defined above, during the analysis, however, remarkable discursive patterns emerged. I termed these patterns “emerging discourses” and analyzed them as recontextualized social practices.

To increase the inter-rater reliability of the analysis, 20% of the data was given to three raters and results were compared using Cronbach’s alpha for each category. The inter-rater reliability was between [ $\alpha = 0.71$  and  $\alpha = 0.83$ ], which ranges from good to high agreement among the raters. It should be noted however, that the agreement rate keeps fluctuating across the analytical categories without, however, falling below  $\alpha = 0.70$ . In order to facilitate future reference or replication by other researchers, the following order has been proposed in all textbook citations used in this study: Abbreviated textbook title, grade level, and page. Appendix 1 fully itemizes the examined textbooks according to the order proposed above.

## 5. Results of the socio-semantic representation of Amazighs

### 5.1. Linguistic inclusion

Given the total linguistic inclusion of Arabs, the dominant social group, and Amazighs, the minoritized ethnic groups (Table 1), it seems that Amazighs were included significantly more than Arabs (63.49% vs. 36.50%). Besides, the results of the Chi-square test ( $p > 0.05$ ) indicate that there is a significant difference between the two included groups of social actors ( $\chi^2 = 19.167$   $p > 0.05$ ). Table 1 also reveals an uneven pattern in the statistical distribution between the direct and the indirect inclusion of both groups. A comparison between both groups demonstrates the fact that in terms of “direct inclusion”, Amazighs were included more significantly than Arabs ( $\chi^2 = 2.240$   $p > 0.05$ ). However, in terms of “indirect inclusion” the difference is not statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 2.240$   $p > 0.05$ ). This means that the two groups were treated similarly in terms of direct inclusion

Examples (1) and (2) illustrate the type of direct inclusion of both Amazighs and Arabs. Example (1) directly includes Amazighs in terms of nomination (**Rabha Akka** which is an Amazigh name), functionalization (journalist), spatialization (**Middle Atlas** which often designates places where Amazigh live), objectification (**Berber carpet**. Amazighs have been identified with objects such as traditional carpets), and temporalization (tenth century). The representation directly includes the social actors, their actions, time, place, and legitimation. The inclusion is total, and therefore, (1) was directly placed under “direct” inclusion.

**Example 1:** Rabha Akka is an Amazigh Journalist. She is from a small city in the Middle Atlas (AWW, p. 14).

**Table 1. Results of the linguistic inclusion of Amazighs and Arabs**

| Inclusion          | Amazighs         | Arabs           | $\chi^2$ | Asymp. Sig. | Cronbach $\alpha$ |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|-------------------|
| Direct Inclusion   | 111<br>(66.46%)  | 23<br>(13.77%)  | 57.791   | .000        | $\alpha = 0.91$   |
| Indirect Inclusion | 56<br>(33.53%)   | 73<br>(43.71%)  | 2.240    | .134        | $\alpha = 0.72$   |
| Total<br>(N = 263) | 167<br>(63.49 %) | 96<br>(36.50 %) | 19.167   | .000        | -----             |

In order to capture this discursive fluctuation over time, Table 2 can be graphically represented as follows (Figure 1):

## 5.2. Unique vs. shared identity

### 5.2.1. Nomination

The analysis reveals three patterns of nominating Amazighs, and therefore representing them in terms of their unique identity: Formal nomination (Title +Last name), Semi-formal nomination (Title + Given name + Last name), and Informal nomination (First name/ Given name only/ Nickname). Table 3 details the verbal variations in nominating Amazighs across the three phases that marked the evolution of Moroccan EFL textbooks.

Table 3 reveals that it is very hard to specify a unified statistical pattern whereby Amazighs were truly nominated and therefore represented in terms of their unique identity. The only textbook which seems to directly endow Amazighs with the power of “nomination” is *Al Masar*, a textbook designed for Common Core students and narrates the life of the *Itry*s family (An Amazigh family) both in Morocco and in London. The Germinal and the Take-off Phases display two contradictory patterns of nomination. While the EFL textbooks of the Germinal Phase predominantly represented Amazighs formally, EFL textbooks from the Take-off Phase opted for the opposite, with Amazighs being predominantly referred to informally (48.93%).

### 5.2.2. Functionalization

When not nominated, Amazighs were categorized, represented in terms of the social/occupational activities they shared with others. Linguistically, the functionalization of Amazighs has been realized by nouns derived from verbs (such as dancer, farmer, and shopkeeper) or by nouns derived from other nouns used to name tools that are associated with an activity (e.g, carpet weavers). Table 4 classifies the major activities (occupations) in which Amazighs were portrayed. Chronologically, one can notice a quantitative and a qualitative growth in the number of the occupational choices with which Amazighs have been identified.

**Table 3. Results of the nomination of Amazighs across the three phases**

|             | Germinal Phase | Critical Phase | Take off Phase | Total          |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Formal      | 17<br>(53.12%) | 4<br>(50%)     | 11<br>(23.40%) | 32<br>(41.02%) |
| Semi-formal | 9<br>(28.12%)  | 3<br>(37.5%)   | 13<br>(27.65%) | 25<br>(32.05%) |
| Informal    | 6<br>(18.75%)  | 1<br>(12.5%)   | 23<br>(48.93%) | 30<br>(38.46)  |
| Total       | 32<br>(100%)   | 8<br>(100%)    | 47<br>(100%)   | 87<br>(100%)   |

**Table 4. The Functionalisation of Amazighs**

| Phases             | Functions                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The Germinal Phase | Farmers, political activists, singers and dancers, musicians, grocer, shepherds, carpet weavers                                                                                       |
| The Critical Phase | Carpet weaver, farmers, singers and dancers, carpet weavers                                                                                                                           |
| The take-off Phase | Businessman/women, journalist, shopkeepers NGO activists, students, cooperative managers, doctors, political activists, football player, farmers, singers and dancers, carpet weavers |



**Table 5. Results of the linguistic Association of Amazighs**

|                       | Political     | Historical    | Cultural     | $\chi^2$   | Asymp. Sig |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| Association<br>N = 28 | 8<br>(28.57%) | 6<br>(21.42%) | 14<br>(50 %) | 3.714<br>— | .156<br>—  |

**Example 8:** We have also pre-Islamic Berber sites, Phoenician sites (EIL2, p. 128)

**Example 9:** Morocco has been influenced by African, Arab, Berber, Jewish and European culture (Ticket 1, p. 112).

**Example 10:** Al Ala, Al Gharnati, Al Malhoun, the songs of religious sects, popular songs of cities, Berber songs of the Atlas, of the Rif, of the Sous and the songs of the Grand South are tangible proof of the richness and diversity of this Moroccan musical Heritage (Quick way 2, p. 30).

Table 5 shows that association takes place 28 times and for different reasons: political, historical, and cultural, with the last one accounting for half of the total association rate. Again, the results of the Chi-square test indicate that the observed difference between the three categories is not significant.

### 5.5. Genericization and impersonalization

Overall, Amazighs have been genericized as being “Berbers”, “Amazighs”, “Atlas dwellers”, “shop-keepers”, and “naturally born singers and dancers”. They have been represented as unspecified, “anonymous” individuals or groups, who have been metonymically represented by reference to something directly linked to their being or the activities they perform. For instance, “traditional carpets”, “argan oil”, “dates” and “goats” are recurrent ways of objectifying Amazighs.

Another type of impersonalization is spatialization whereby Amazighs have been replaced by a direct reference to the spaces to which they relate. Spatialization, if taken alone, however, may not constitute a reliable criterion for reference to Amazighs given that cities such as Agadir or Essaouira are not homogeneously Amazigh. In this context, the discourse combines other modes of inclusion such as names of the social actors, or the social activities they are most likely to engage in. Excessive spatialization, as in (11) gives the impression that Amazighs are mountain dwellers who barely go beyond the village: *Ait Haddidou*, *Imilchil*, and *Atlas Mountain* are essentially Amazigh locations which are excessively highlighted in Moroccan school textbooks.

**Example 11:** We visited the wedding festival of the Ait Haddidou near *Imilchil*, high in the *Atlas Mountain* (Horizons, p. 85, emphasis added)

## 6. Discussion of the results

There are several possible explanations for the results which can be framed within five emerging discourses. The discussion of the findings depends on the results obtained from the recording sheets devised according to research questions and the predetermined main socio-semantic categories and subcategories (Van Leeuwen, 2008). All the episodes (sentences, phrases, clauses, separately and in conjunction with the neighboring phrases, clauses and sentences in reading passages, dialogues, and /or language tasks) were extracted and analyzed in light of Van Leeuwen, 2009, 2008) social actor analysis, Scott’s (2018) sociology of the (un)marked, and Banks’s (1989, 1993) Ethnic Content Integration model.



is at its most powerful when it is invisible, when discourses have been naturalized and become part of our everyday common sense” (p. 341). There is power in the iteration of silence, echoing the Simon and Garfunkel classic, “The Sound of Silence,” which criticizes silence that maintains domination. Finally, it seems that the conclusions reached thus far consolidate the findings of various studies which share the same critical concern (Chu, 2015; Naseem et al., 2016; Slimi, 2009; Zhao, 2014). Similarly, Naseem et al. (2016) reach the conclusion that textbooks, as ideological state apparatus, ‘become a key site for normalizing the authority of one group while also normalizing the rest as the “other”. This “other” need not only be a person, a group, or a rival nation. Whole knowledge systems and ways of knowing, thinking, doing, and being are “othered” (p. 9).

Chronologically, during the Critical Phase, Amazighs were almost excluded from the official EFL discourse both linguistically and visually. This can be explained in light of the dominant post-independence narratives, which tend to include images/texts of scientists (often Arabs), national heroes, figures, dates and events, whose task was to enhance the national unity and strengthen the national pride. Striking, however, is the fact that the Critical Phase was the period during which Morocco witnessed a heated debate on the question, place, and role of Amazighs in the overall socio-political architecture. Instead of responding, textbooks chose to categorically “avoid” Amazighs, both linguistically and visually. This multimodal exclusion was compensated for by an excessive presence of “themes” and thematic structures which, compared to textbooks from the other phases, were predominantly about “minorities”. The Critical Phase seems to employ what Wodak et al. (2009) refer to as the topos of “avoidance” and “evasiveness” which translate into a laissez-faire attitude favoring in a way a deliberate non-interference as long as it “happens” “there” therefore “we are not concerned”.

The Take-off Phase has been characterized by a marked increase in visual and linguistic inclusion, laying the cornerstone for a multimodal revolution, with Amazighs being visually included 51 times and thus accounting for half of the total visual inclusion. Visually as well as linguistically, it seems that this phase represents a special socio-political moment where the Amazighs’ “elite” were given the opportunity to represent themselves instead of being represented. The textbooks that belong to this phase could best be described as a pedagogical outcry or voices from below.

### **6.2. Amazighs: a nation of singers, dancers, and shopkeepers**

The linguistic representation reveals three significant patterns of inclusion for Amazighs in terms of functionalization. First, chronologically, a noticeable quantitative growth in the number of the occupational choices with which Amazighs have been identified can be clearly located. Second, considering the quality of the representational choices, the findings also show a qualitative clear upward- trend in the “quality” of the activities or the occupations in which Amazighs have been depicted. For example, when contrasted with the Germinal Phase or the Critical Phase where Amazighs were predominantly farmers, singers or dancers, the newly emerging discourse (Take-off Phase) displays them as businessman/women, journalists, students, cooperative managers, doctors, political activists, and football players. Third, it seems that some activities or occupations (singers, dancers, farmers, carpet weavers) defy time and persist throughout the three phases, and thus become defining properties of the Amazigh identity.

Remarkably, it seems that there is a considerable difference between referring to Amazighs and Arabs in terms of functionalization where the relationship is strikingly asymmetrical. For example, during the Germinal Phase, Arabs were predominantly functionalized but in activities and occupations which are related to knowledge productions (scholars, teachers, scientists). In other words, Arabs were not represented in terms of “doing” but in terms of “being” (e.g., scientists and scholars). Amazighs, on the other hand, were predominantly portrayed in terms of “doings”.

### **6.3. Amazighs: nominated yet genericized**

When it comes to nominating Amazighs, the Germinal and the Take-off Phases display two contradictory patterns of nomination. While the EFL textbooks of the Germinal Phase

However, it should be noted that the constructed alliance has only a “temporary benefit” (Van Leeuwen, 2008, pp. 38–39). Once the benefit is achieved, dissociation takes place. In many texts, associations are formed and unformed (“dissociation”) as the texts unfold, and it is of critical interest to us to investigate the different discourses which display dissociation. The episode on marriage rituals in Imilchil festival centers on Amazighs’ unique, yet outlandish, marriage traditions. However, when it comes to “hospitality”, dissociation takes place, rendering this value a purely Moroccan trait available for all and to all.

In addition, it seems that tribalism and rurality accompany the representation of Amazighs under both folklorized and non- folklorized discourses. Three critical insights are worth discussing at this juncture. First, the excessive ideological construction of Amazighs as essentially rural leads to their portrayal as “virtuous children of nature” (Anderson, 1991, as cited in Slimi, 2009, p. 86), who are continuously set in a background of a natural landscape containing hills, plants, and grass. This formulaic depiction not only tokenizes them but removes the complexities of the daily lives, depicting them as “unspoiled ethnic Other” (Varutti, 2014, p. 183). Second, being essentially rural, a sense of “nostalgia” might be built in the way Amazighs are portrayed as “reservoirs of still-extant authenticity” (Schein, 1994, p.72, as cited in Zhao & Postiglione, 2010), or a counterweight to modernity. Amazigh social actors are often portrayed as having a “traditional” life in an environment that is close to nature; thus, lending more authenticity and exoticism to the representation. Slimi (2009) points out that rural depiction of ethnic groups helps draw a clear line between them and “mainstream” society, setting them apart “from the urban metropolises, from realms of education, employment and other activities of civility” (p. 87). Third, it seems that the discourse not only depicts Amazighs social actors as “virtuous children of nature”, but also specifies the types of activities which are supposed to strengthen this representation. The most common occupation associated with Amazighs in this discourse is that of animal husbandry, depicting them as shepherded both linguistically and visually.

## 7. Conclusion

In this article, I attempted to analyze the place of the Amazigh ethnic groups in Moroccan EFL textbooks since 1980s. I have demonstrated that Amazighs have not been included as much as “mentioned”. Mentioning, here, can be taken as the lowest level of the integration of ethnic content in school textbooks. The analysis has also revealed the centrality of specific socio-semantic categories for the representation of Amazighs. These categories have been instrumental in revealing the extent to which Amazighs have been categorized, genericized and collectivized, which ultimately, lead to the backgrounding of Amazighs and to the suppression of their individuality. Association and dissociation have also undermined the manner in which Amazighs have been included in a “temporary” alliance with other social groups. The analysis has shown the fragility of such alliance which, soon, gives way to dissociation. Related to this are “functionalization” and “identification”, which, on the whole, have revealed intriguing patterns of representation which have tended to limit Amazighs in specific social activities that define them in terms of what they do or in terms of who they, permanently or unavoidably, are. Finally, referring to Amazighs in terms of impersonalization, such as spatialization and abstraction, leads to the objectification of Amazigh social actors through the fixation of their way of life. The examined textbooks include nothing about Amazighs contributions to modern Morocco.

I do believe that the conclusions I have reached thus far can help us set the following two overarching recommendations. First, in Morocco, the national curriculum is centrally administered by the Ministry of Education which is accountable for the design and development of school textbooks. Consequently, the Moroccan Ministry of Education should play a dynamic role in the enhancement of ethnic content in school textbooks. It should also establish new guidelines to evaluate the quality of textbooks in terms of ethnic equity. In addition, the Ministry needs to consider the improvement of instructional materials to meet the needs of the diverse Moroccan population. Second, it is incumbent on the Ministry of Education to provide training programs for

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### Appendix: Analyzed Moroccan EFL textbooks used in the study

|                    |                        | <b>Textbooks</b>                           | <b>Level</b>          | <b>Year</b> | <b>House and place of publication</b> |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| THE GERMINAL PHASE | <b>Students' Books</b> | <i>Steps to English</i>                    | 1 <sup>st</sup> year  | 1981        | Librairie Al Maarif: Rabat            |
|                    |                        | <i>Further Steps in English</i>            | 2 <sup>nd</sup> year  | 1996        | SODEN: Mohammedia                     |
|                    |                        | <i>English in Life</i>                     | 1 <sup>st</sup> year  | 1992        | Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca            |
|                    |                        | <i>English in Life</i>                     | 2 <sup>nd</sup> year  | 1993        | Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca            |
|                    |                        | <i>English in Life</i>                     | 3 <sup>rd</sup> year  | 1993        | Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca            |
|                    | <b>Ancillaries</b>     | <i>Further Steps in English</i>            | Teacher's Book        | 1988        | Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca            |
|                    |                        | <i>English in Life 1<sup>st</sup> year</i> | Teacher's Book        | 1992        | Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca            |
|                    |                        | <i>English in Life 2<sup>nd</sup> year</i> | Teacher's Book        | 1993        | Nejah Eljadida: Casablanca            |
|                    |                        | <i>English in Life 2<sup>nd</sup> year</i> | Workbook              | 1995        | El Maarif Eljadida: Casablanca        |
|                    |                        | Textbooks                                  | Level                 | Year        | House and Place of Publication        |
| THE CRITICAL PHASE | <b>Students' books</b> | <i>Quick Way 1</i>                         | 1 <sup>st</sup> Year  | 2003        | Beni Snassen: Salé                    |
|                    |                        | <i>Quick Way 2</i>                         | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year  | 2003        | Beni Snassen: Salé                    |
|                    |                        | <i>Quick Way 3</i>                         | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year  | 2005        | Librairie Alouma: Casablanca          |
|                    |                        | <i>Focus</i>                               | 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 2004        | Nadia Edition: Casablanca             |
|                    |                        | <i>English Horizons</i>                    | 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 2005        | Scotchpress, Casablanca               |
|                    | <b>Ancillaries</b>     | <i>My Way</i>                              | Activity Book         | 2004        | Librairie Alouma: Casablanca          |
|                    |                        | <i>Highway 3</i>                           | Workbook              | 2002        | Beni Snassen: Salé                    |
|                    |                        | <i>Quick Way1</i>                          | Teacher's book        | 2003        | Beni Snassen: Salé                    |
|                    |                        | <i>English Horizons</i>                    | workbook              | 2012        | Scotchpress, Macmillan                |
|                    |                        | <i>Focus</i>                               | Workbook              | 2013        | Nadia Edition: Casablanca             |
|                    |                        | Textbooks                                  | Level                 | Year        | House and Place of Publication        |

(Continued)



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